

AGENDA ITEM X-I

CHAPTER 6 HEALTH EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND RESEARCH FUNDS

Subchapter D. TOBACCO LAWSUIT SETTLEMENT FUNDS

Section 6.73 Nursing, Allied Health and Other Health-Related Education Grant Program

(a) General Information. The program, as it applies to this section:

(1) Name—Nursing, Allied Health and Other Health-related Education Grant Program.

(2) Purpose—To provide funding to eligible institutions of higher education to establish or support academic instruction and training programs on public health issues specific to nursing, allied health and other health-related education.

(3) Authority—Texas Education Code, Sections 63.201 – 63.203.

(4) Eligible institutions—Public institutions of higher education that offer upper-level academic instruction and training in the fields of nursing, allied health, or other health-related education. Institutions or components identified under Texas Education Code, Section 63.002(c), and Sections 63.101 – 63.102 are not eligible to receive funding through the grant program.

(5) Eligible programs—Nursing, allied health or other health-related educational initiatives, including those that expand existing academic programs, and develop other new or existing activities and projects, that are not funded by state appropriation during the funding period.

(6) Application requirements—Applications shall be submitted to the Board in the format and at the time specified by the Board.

(7) General Selection Criteria—Competitive. Designed to award grants that provide the best overall value to the state. Selection criteria shall be based on:

(A) Program quality as determined by peer reviewers;

(B) Impact the grant award shall have on academic instruction and training in public health-related education in the state;

(C) Cost of the proposed program; and

(D) Other factors to be considered by the Board, including financial ability to perform program, state and regional needs and priorities, ability to continue program after grant period, and past performance.

(8) Minimum award--\$75,000 per award in any fiscal year.

(9) Maximum award--15 percent of the estimated available funding per award in any fiscal year.

(10) Maximum award length--A program is eligible to receive funding for two years within a fiscal biennium. Previously funded programs may reapply for one additional funding biennium.

(b) Peer Review.

(1) The Board shall use peer reviewers to evaluate the quality of applications.

(2) The Commissioner shall select qualified individuals to serve as reviewers. Peer reviewers shall demonstrate appropriate credentials to evaluate grant applications in health education. Reviewers shall not evaluate any applications for which they have a conflict of interest.

(3) The Board staff shall provide written instructions and training for peer reviewers.

(4) The peer reviewers shall score each application according to these award criteria and weights:

(A) Significance of instruction or training program. The reviewers shall consider issues such as: How relevant and timely is this topic to public health issues for the particular discipline? Is the program unique and important or unique and important for a geographic area? Will the program be useful to or later replicated at other institutions in the state? Will the program provide an advancement of knowledge that may result in positive changes in patient care, education or health care policy? How many people will benefit directly from the program? Maximum points: 30

(B) Resources to perform program. The reviewers shall consider issues such as: What new personnel, equipment and facility resources are needed for the program? What existing resources can be used? What are the professional credentials and experience of the program's key personnel? Maximum points: 15

(C) Program design. The reviewers shall consider issues such as: Is the program well defined? Is it a discrete program which can be completed in the grant period? Are the goals and objectives realistic? How well has the proposal described the program development process and the nature of analysis to be carried out? Maximum points: 25

(D) Cost sharing. The reviewers shall consider issues such as: What level of local funding, if any, is available to share in the cost of the program? Maximum points: 5

(E) Cost effectiveness. The reviewers shall consider issues such as: How appropriate are the chosen equipment, staffing and service providers for the program given the cost of the program? Is the budget realistic? Does the proposal make effective use of the grant funds? Maximum points: 25.

(F) Evaluation and expected outcomes. The reviewers shall consider issues such as: How well has the proposal described the methodology to evaluate and estimate the outcomes from the program? Is the evaluation methodology appropriate and effective? Are the outcomes realistic? Maximum points: 30

(c) Application and Review Process.

(1) The Commissioner may solicit recommendations from an advisory committee or other group of qualified individuals on funding priorities for each biennial grant period, and the administration of the application and review process.

(2) The Board staff shall review applications to determine if they adhere to the grant program requirements and the funding priorities contained in the Request for Proposal. An application must meet the requirements of the Request for Proposal and be submitted with proper authorization before or on the day specified by the Board to qualify for further consideration. Qualified applications shall be forwarded to the peer reviewers for evaluation. Board staff shall notify applicants eliminated through the screening process within 30 days of the submission deadline.

(3) Peer reviewers shall evaluate applications and assign scores based on award criteria. All evaluations and scores of the review committee are final.

(4) Board staff shall rank each application based on points assigned by peer reviewers, and then may request that individuals representing the most highly-ranked applications make oral presentations on their applications to the peer reviewers and Board staff. The Board staff may consider reviewer comments from the oral presentations in recommending ~~recommend~~ a priority ranked list of applications to the Commissioner for approval.

(d) Funding Decisions.

(1) Applications for grant funding shall be evaluated only upon the information provided in the written application.

(2) The Board delegates to the Commissioner the authority to approve grants upon the recommendation of the panel of peer reviewers and Board staff. The Commissioner shall report approved grants to the Board for each biennial grant period.

(3) Funding recommendations to the Commissioner shall consist of the most highly ranked and recommended applications up to the limit of available funds. If

available funds are insufficient to fund a proposal after the higher-ranking and recommended applications have been funded, staff shall negotiate with the applicant to determine if a lesser amount would be acceptable. If the applicant does not agree to the lesser amount, the staff shall negotiate with the next applicant on the ranked list. The process shall be continued until all grant funds are awarded.

(e) Contract. Following approval of grant awards by the Commissioner, the successful applicants must sign a contract issued by Board staff and based on the information contained in the application.

(f) Cancellation or Suspension of Grants. The Board has the right to reject all applications and cancel a grant solicitation at any point before a contract is signed.

(g) Request for Proposal. The full text of the administrative regulations and budget guidelines for this program are contained in the official Request for Proposal (RFP) available upon request from the Board.

(h) This subsection pertains to the 2004-05 and 2006-07 biennia only (rules are effective only from September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2007).

(1) Funds available to the program for the 2004-05 and 2006-07 biennia will be distributed as grants in proportions determined by the Commissioner through one or more programs that are based on:

(A) a competitive, peer-reviewed process for eligible institutions proposing to address the shortage of registered nurses and nursing faculty, as described in subsections (a)-(g) of this section unless amended in subsections (h)(2) and (h)(3) of this section;

(B) a competitive, staff-reviewed process for eligible institutions, as amended in subsection (h)(2) of this section that are seeking awards of \$15,000 or less for a one-year grant; or

(C) a criteria-based, funding formula for eligible institutions, as amended in subsection (h)(2) of this section.

(2) In subsection (a)(4), of this section, eligible institutions, as they pertain to subsection (h)(1) of this section, are public institutions of higher education, private or independent institutions of higher education and hospitals that offer nursing programs that prepare students for initial licensure as registered nurses or that prepare qualified faculty for such nursing programs.

(3) In subsections (a)(5), (a)(8), (a)(9), (a)(10) and (b)(4), of this section, the following pertain to subsection (h)(1)(A) of this section:

(A) Eligible programs - Nursing initiatives that propose to address the shortage of registered nurses by developing new or existing activities and

projects that will promote innovation in the education, recruitment and retention of nursing students and qualified faculty.

(B) Minimum award - Minimum award is \$10,000 per award in any fiscal year for a two-year or three-year grant.

(C) Maximum award - Maximum award is \$150,000 per award in any fiscal year for a two-year grant and \$750,000 per award in any fiscal year for a three year grant.

(D) Maximum award length – A program is eligible to receive funding for up to three years, contingent upon evaluation of the progress and effectiveness of the program after one year of funding.

(E) ~~(D)~~ Peer review award criteria and weights may be adjusted to best fulfill the purpose of the grant program.